

Chapter 2

Policy Analysis Workbook

Resource Mapping provides a process to chart unfamiliar territory. Just as a map helps to make the process of plotting an unfamiliar route easier – especially because it is a tool to help us to visualize the route and see where we’re going – this policy workbook is a similar tool to help make Resource Mapping a more understandable process which can be modeled in local partnerships and nationwide. In essence, Resource Mapping will entail a) determining the parameters within which the journey will proceed; b) learning about the terrain that may be crossed en route; c) assessing the vast network of highways and the general landscape to determine where there is smooth traveling and where barriers may slow our journey; and d) determining the most efficient route to reach our destination.

This workbook presents a replication process for using Resource Mapping to develop strategies to sustain School-to-Career principles, including step-by-step guidelines for Resource Mapping, examples of Colorado’s work and recommendations, and worksheets/templates to be used to work through the Resource Mapping process. This policy workbook has been designed primarily as a tool to help other states use Resource Mapping as a process for determining strategies to support and sustain the School-to-Career system. However, because of the nature of Resource Mapping and policy development, this process could also be used for sustainability planning around individual pieces of the School-to-Career system (e.g. guidance and counseling, work-based learning, etc.) or even for other broad systems change initiatives.

This workbook presents Resource Mapping as six distinct phases of a process to support and sustain School-to-Career principles:

1. Choosing travel companions: Convening a Resource Mapping task force
2. Assessing the landscape: Developing the broad context for Resource Mapping
3. Identifying passable highways and byways: Completing the Resource Scan
4. Building a travel itinerary: Analyzing the assets and challenges
5. Plotting a route: Determining opportunities for policy linkages and procedural shifts
6. Going through customs: Eliciting agency support



I: Choosing travel companions

Convening the Resource Mapping Task Force

The first step in the resource mapping process is to convene a Task Force to help make sense of all the travel options and to navigate the most efficient route between here and there. Essentially, it should be created as a panel of experts to aid in understanding all the roads and possible routes for our journey, and charged with providing direction, ideas, and feedback about Resource Mapping as the process unfolds.

*The Task Force
should be
comprised of
decision-makers
who understand
their organizations'
budget and/or
policy priorities.*

For maximum results, the Task Force should be comprised of decision-makers – representing state agencies and other organizations who are stakeholders in the sustainability of the School-to-Career system – who understand their organizations' budget and/or policy priorities. When assembling the Task Force, it is important to look beyond the traditional players from the education and workforce development systems: consider the broad array of agencies, programs, and initiatives which share School-to-Career's primary goal of ensuring that all youth are ready and able to excel in school and to pursue employment and lifelong learning opportunities.

For example, in Colorado, the Task Force included members representing youth corrections, educational technology, school-based health initiatives, and adult education. These representatives provided a valuable perspective and interesting ideas for linkages not traditionally considered within the realm of School-to-Career. We learned that such a diverse and broadly focused Task Force can directly result in a rich, well-rounded set of policy recommendations.

Steps to consider in convening an effective Resource Mapping Task Force:

1. Look across state agencies, government, and community organizations to identify all areas which include a focus on youth policy around education reform, workforce development, youth-at-risk, and community development. Representatives from these program areas will form the core of the Task Force.
2. Consider the scope of your project to determine the additional organizations you want represented on the Task Force. For example, will your project include a local component? If so, you probably want to include representatives from some local partnerships. Are there policy advisors and/or budget analysts in the Governor's Office who focus on youth issues? What non-profit organizations, foundations, or policy advocacy groups are players in the educational arena?
3. Again, consider the scope of your project to determine how to weight the representation from each organization. For example, because of the heavy emphasis on the K-16 educational system in School-to-Career, six members representing K-16 education were included on Colorado's Task Force.
4. Once all the organizations and number of representatives from each have been identified,



write a letter to each director requesting him/her to identify and appoint the member(s) to the Task Force. In the letter be sure to articulate the purpose of the project, the role of the Task Force, and what skills Task Force members need (an example of Colorado's letter is in the Appendix). In terms of organizational theory, this process is key because it will begin to set the stage for garnering the agency directors' buy-in of the forthcoming recommendations because they are exercising control over the project – by appointing Task Force members – at the outset.

In Colorado, the Resource Mapping Task Force was comprised of 24 members, representing state agencies, statewide policy organizations, and local partnerships.

- ◆ Four members represented the K-12 education system
- ◆ The higher education system and the community college system each provided one representative.
- ◆ Three members were from the Department of Human Services, two representing Vocational Rehabilitation and one representing Youth Corrections
- ◆ The Departments of Labor and Employment, Local Affairs, and Public Health each provided one representative
- ◆ The Governor's Office was represented by three members, one from the budget office, one from the policy office, and one from a workforce development initiative
- ◆ The state's economic development office provided one representative
- ◆ The remaining eight members of the Task Force included representatives from three local partnerships and a Regional Coordinator, a social policy foundation, a 4-year university, the Education Commission of the States, and a nonprofit employers' organization

The following worksheet can be used as a tool to assist in assembling a Resource Mapping Task Force:



Task Force Configuration Worksheet

Think about School-to-Career implementation in your state. Who should serve on the Task Force? Use the following form to assist in assembling a Resource Mapping Task Force.

Education Reform

Agency/Organization

Name of potential Task Force member

Workforce Development

Agency/Organization

Name of potential Task Force member

Youth At-Risk

Agency/Organization

Name of potential Task Force member

Community Development

Agency/Organization

Name of potential Task Force member

II: *Assessing the landscape*

*It is not practical
to have a detailed
road map depicting
hundreds and
hundreds of miles...*

Identifying the broad context for Resource Mapping

In essence, the purpose of this step is to get a general sense of the overall scope of our journey and the lay-of-the-land. Consider the trip planning analogy – it is not practical to have a detailed road map depicting hundreds and hundreds of miles because the size of the paper necessary to chart such an area would be immense. For example, if you were traveling from Philadelphia to Des Moines, you would likely have separate maps of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, allowing you to see the detail of all the segments of your journey, aiding you to plot the best route. Likewise, for the Resource Mapping project, we separated the project into separate maps, comprising four major themes from which the analysis and policy recommendations can follow.

In Colorado, these themes were:

1. Education reform
2. Workforce development
3. Youth-at-risk
4. Community involvement

Colorado's vision and goals for School-to-Career primarily defined these themes for analysis. Consider the following steps to reveal the elements which will shape your project:

- ◆ Dissect your vision statement, separating out the key elements.
- ◆ Consider the scope of your project to determine how these elements can be turned into goal statements to shape the analysis.
- ◆ Are there other important themes of your School-to-Career system, not identified in the vision statement, which should be addressed by resource mapping? State these themes as goal statement(s).

For example, in Colorado, this process revealed the following themes for analysis:

Vision statement

"School-to-Career is rooted in a shared vision of an efficient, standards-based education system, tied to economic development, which ensures that all youth are prepared to excel in the competitive global economy."



Identify the vision's major themes

1. Standards-based education system
2. Aligning education and economic development
3. Preparing all youth to excel in the global economy

Identify other focus areas for Resource Mapping

In Colorado, the focus on families and communities as partners in the School-to-Career system is an important element, but does not fit into any of the categories elicited via the vision statement. Thus, a fourth theme for analysis was added.

4. Community involvement

How can these themes be translated into goals of Resource Mapping?

1. Education reform: Elements of School-to-Career are integrated throughout the K-16 education system; statewide education reform initiatives are connected with the goals and principles of the School-to-Career system, supporting such efforts to increase student achievement and postsecondary opportunities.
2. Workforce development: Elements of School-to-Career are connected with the workforce development system; employer involvement is increased through new and expanded business-education partnerships.
3. Youth-at-risk: A strong and sustainable School-to-Career system is a key strategy to ensuring that all students (including at-risk and out-of-school youth, youth with disabilities, academically talented students, minorities, children of migrant workers, young women, and students with limited English proficiency) are prepared for future employment and lifelong learning opportunities.
4. Community involvement: Partnerships and collaborative efforts connect students and families with community resources to ensure that all youth are prepared to attain education and employment goals.



Defining Themes for Analysis

Review the state’s vision for School-to-Career

Vision statement:

Identify the major themes embedded in the vision statement:

◆

◆

◆

How can these themes become goals for Resource Mapping?

◆

◆

◆

Are there other broad goals to be pursued through Resource Mapping?

◆

◆

III. Finding Potholes and Expressways

Identifying the barriers and facilitators of a sustainable School-to-Career system

Once the themes for analysis have been identified, another important framing exercise is to consider some of the broad barriers and facilitators of a sustained School-to-Career system, within each theme.

In Colorado, for example, the Task Force discussed each theme and considered the elements which they believe constitute evidence of a fully sustained School-to-Career system and the broad barriers which may inhibit such sustainability. This process is important to get the group up-to-speed on School-to-Career issues, as well as to begin to think broadly, in terms of systems change and sustainability. Moreover, it is important to involve the Task Force in the project and its outcomes by giving the group license to explore ideas, define elements of a fully integrated and sustained School-to-Career system, and investigate some of the broad opportunities and challenges that could affect the viability of School-to-Career.

Elements which constitute evidence of a fully sustained School-to-Career system and the broad barriers which may inhibit such sustainability were explored.

To frame this general analysis of the barriers and facilitators, the Task Force considered the following questions:

1. What are some salient indicators of a successful K-16 education system where learning is contextual, students are excited about learning and are aware of their postsecondary education and employment opportunities, and employers believe that job applicants are suitably skilled for employment?
2. Are there examples in local partnerships or state agencies, around the four themes, where elements of School-to-Career have been instituted into program operations?
3. What does the national research say about indicators of success of a strong and sustainable School-to-Career system?
4. If the overall framework of School-to-Career (including the federal grant money supporting the initiative) were suddenly lifted away, what broad elements would have to be in place to ensure that the current reform efforts would not crumble?
5. What barriers could cause such reforms to dissolve?



*What have been
the greatest
impediments to
implementing
School-to-Career
across the state?*

6. To date, what have been the greatest impediments to implementing School-to-Career across the state?
7. What barriers have been cited in national research?
8. What programs can support the sustainability of a School-to-Career system within the framework of the four themes?

The following chart describes each of Colorado's themes for analysis and presents a sampling of some of the broad barriers and facilitators of a sustained School-to-Career system. Additionally, the chart suggests some programs which could be used to create such an ideal world by coordinating program goals with those of School-to-Career.

The information included in this chart was elicited from a brainstorming session of the Task Force via the process framed by the preceding questions. Following this chart, you will find a template for you to use to identify some of the barriers and facilitators which affect sustainability. Copy this template for each goal you have defined. Remember to consider the eight framing questions as each goal is considered.

